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which every educated reader will give. On the contrary, his well-balanced formulas no more save him than they would less judicial thinkers from the erroneous conclusions that follow from false values assigned to his terms. For a single instance—competent critics will hardly be found to challenge these propositions: “We believe that morality depends upon something deeper and more permanent than any of the dogmas that have hitherto been current in the churches. It is a product of human nature, not of any of these transcendental speculations or faint survivals of traditional superstitions. Morality has grown up independently of and often in spite of theology” (Vol. I, p. 20). Men who know most about the practical value of dogmas may be as sure as Mr. Stephen that they are not the source but the expression of morality. They will then by no means find themselves driven to his conclusion that “a religion really to affect the vulgar must be a superstition ; to satisfy the thoughtful it must be a philosophy ;” and, further, “it is impracticable so to fuse the crude with the refined as to make a working compromise” (Vol. I, p. 12). The data of ethics are all the available facts about the elements which have to be combined by the will in the various sorts of moral acts, and about the consequences that flow from conduct. The Christian revelation is an exhibit of some of these facts and relations. Its essence is not at all in any philosophy which purports to rationalize these data. It is consequently altogether gratuitous to posit a necessary antithesis between Christianity and ethics.

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DISCOURSES ON THE EPISTLE OF PAUL TO THE PHILIPPIANS.

By REV. FREDERICK A. NOBLE, D.D., Pastor Union Park Congregational Church, Chicago. New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company. Pp. 385; cloth. \$1.25.

THE twenty-three sermons which make up this volume are in the main expository. Taken as a whole they are of a high order. The preacher has so divided the epistle that each passage for exposition furnishes a well-defined subject. Around this subject, which is the central, unifying thought of the passage, he has admirably grouped its subordinate thoughts ; so that unity, the fundamental law of all effective discourse, has been very perfectly realized.

The preacher has evidently mastered the thought of the epistle ; at all events, he has made up his mind as to what Paul meant when he wrote it. He presents his views of the apostle's thought luminously and with the accent of conviction. He illustrates those views from a wide range of observation and reading. While he is too wise to turn aside from his purpose to discuss before a popular audience questions of criticism, he evidently has in mind the results of the best exegetical scholarship of the day. He also presents, irrespective of fear or favor, all the doctrines and duties of this epistle, so rich in profound thought and so full of the experiences of Paul, the prisoner. He thus has occasion to treat of subjects which one who preaches only topical sermons might not touch during his entire ministry. This is one of the incidental, but vastly important benefits which flow from the thorough popular exposition of an entire epistle.

The style of these discourses is clear and forceful, and scattered here and there over these pages are passages of rare beauty. In fact there is so much which is worthy of commendation, that it seems almost ungracious to present any adverse criticism. But we meet occasionally a lumberly sentence. For instance, they "came into the acceptance of Christ," instead of "they accepted Christ;" "it is the perception which takes place with the ethical senses whereby as in the flash of an instant, some things are seen to be right and others wrong." Here we find at least seven superfluous words. How many ethical "senses" have we? "In the flash of an instant" is tautological; if the flash had been more than an instant it would not have been a "*flash*" at all. In setting forth what Paul meant by "knowledge," he closes a paragraph with this sentence: "It is not *gnosis* merely; it is *epignosis*." For most of his hearers, he crowned that paragraph with darkness.

But the gravest defect in these discourses is a lack of directness. They remind one more of an essay read in some literary club, to those seated cozily around the author, to whom courtesy forbids him to make earnest personal appeal, than of the divine message of an ambassador of Christ, who grapples with an audience that he may stir them up to strive after a higher, holier life. These sermons have but little of that important applicatory element which is so prominent in the sermons of Maclaren, the prince of modern expository preachers.

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